



# THE POLL CAT

The Newsletter for  
LA County  
Pollworkers  
Issue 9  
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## POLLWORKER HALL OF FAME

**W**ere you one of our heroes? Were you one of the 20,370 pollworkers responsible for 97% of the polls opening on time in the March 5, 2002 Primary Election? There was an unprecedented number of "no shows" in March resulting in 124 late opening polls of the 4,845.

Many pollworkers faced circumstances that you had never envisioned and stood up to the test admirably. The following are but a few stories from pollworkers.....



### ***Inspector Suzanna Beal to the Rescue!***

On Election morning, March 5, 2002, Ms. Beal was driving past a poll in which she had previously served when she noticed a group of people (pollworkers) sitting on the sidewalk with nothing but wooden voting booths. The assigned Inspector had not shown up and no one knew where he/she or the supplies were. Ms. Beal high-tailed it down to Norwalk, requested that emergency supplies be made up, brought the supplies back to the poll location, assumed Inspector duties and saved the election for the neighborhood voters.

***What a star!***  
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### **Election Day "Picnic"!**

Long Beach Inspectors Ernestine and John were locked out of their assigned polling place Election morning. At 7am they set up their polls on picnic tables and processed voters until 8:45 am when they gained access to the church! Way to go Ernestine and John!

### **A True Hero...And Willing to Serve Again!**

When County Social Services employee Lana Burnett agreed to serve



at an Inglewood precinct for which no Inspector could be found, she had no idea what she was getting in to. Lana and her small team, consisting of a local pollworker and Student pollworker, assisted voters without supplies until emergency supplies

arrived. Far from being turned off by this experience, Ms. Burnett has volunteered to serve again on November 5<sup>th</sup>! *Hurrah!*

### **City Clerks Save the Day!**

City Clerks from all over Los Angeles County assisted with recruiting poll locations, advised voters on where to vote and dispatched staff to help open polling places. Bellflower City Clerk Debra Bauchop even drove to a drop-out Inspector's home (he had gone to work!) to pick up the supplies from a family member. Glendora City Clerk Joann Sharp drove to Norwalk to pick up emergency supplies and return them to a problem poll in her city. *Many thanks to our 88 City Clerks!*

### **Now here's a real Dedicated LA County Pollworker!**

Rachel Gonzalez was called at home at 11pm the night before the election and asked to come to Norwalk to be trained to serve as an Inspector in Covina.

She was so nervous and determined to do a good job that when she

returned home at 2 am, she stayed up an extra two hours watching and re-watching the training video!

### **CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR ELECTION HEROES!**



### **INSPECTOR SUPPLY PICK UP PROGRAM RIDES AGAIN!**

Inspectors in "North County" and Long Beach/Lakewood will be picking up their supplies at Check-in-Centers on October 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. As a bonus, these Inspectors will be using our light-weight aluminum voting booths. Participating Inspectors will receive a packet in the mail with more information. This is a continuation of the November 2001 election pilot program.

# What's New, Pussy Cat?!

## NEW SUPPLY BOX ON WHEELS!

Many of you have expressed concerns about the 54-pound election supply box. After 30 years with the old brown box, we receive funding for 5,000 new boxes on wheels! We think you'll love the new box. You'll be able to roll it into your poll and can easily clip the vote recorder suitcase to the top!



New Polls Division Manager  
Debbie Martin happily totes the  
new Supply Box!

## Attention Inspectors: Keep a Look Out for Your Touchscreen Voter Lists!!



You will need to mark "TS" in your roster next to the names of those voters who voted touchscreen. Early voting touchscreen will be offered October 22<sup>nd</sup> through November 1<sup>st</sup>. The lists will not be delivered by the post office because of the time crunch. A private vendor will be delivering your Touchscreen voter lists to you by Monday night, November 4<sup>th</sup>. PLEASE be on the look out for this important delivery!!

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## How Many Pollworkers Will Staff YOUR Poll?

Our goal is to staff precincts with 1,000 or more voters with an Inspector and **FOUR** Clerks.



Precincts with less than 1,000 registered voters will have an Inspector and **THREE** Clerks assigned.



## **ROAD MAP: GUIDE TO THE FUTURE OF VOTING IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY**

**W**hat voting system will Los Angeles County voters be using in the future as a result of the recent decertification of the punch card voting system? Here's your INSIDER'S GUIDE to the County's plan.

### **PHASE 1: EXPANDING "EARLY VOTING" ON TOUCHSCREENS**

Electronic Touchscreen voting was introduced in conjunction with the "early voting" period in the two weeks prior to the November 2000 Election (21,000 of our voters tried it out and 99% rated it great!) For the **November 5, 2002 Election**, Touchscreen voting will be available from Oct. 22 through Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> at 21 locations across the County (locations will be listed in all sample ballot booklets). Voters will still use punch card ballots at all polls on Nov 5<sup>th</sup> and for absentee voting by mail. In March 2003 we hope to use touchscreen units at the polls for two small city elections to continue to familiarize voters with it.

#### **What is Touchscreen Voting?**

Similar to withdrawing cash from an ATM machine, voters cast their ballots electronically by touching a finger on the screen. This system will be available to ALL voters who wish to try out the new technology during the "early voting period" in the two weeks before major elections. Voters who are blind or visually impaired may vote privately/independently by use of a headset to orally guide them through their ballot selections. Voters with limited-English proficiency will find the Touchscreen ballot available in six federally required languages in addition to English.

The Touchscreen ballot contains the same candidates/measures as the ballot voters would receive at their regular polling places or through the mail if voting absentee.



## PHASE 2: TRANSITIONAL VOTING SYSTEM

The recent federal court decision decertifying punch card voting systems requires replacement of our system by the March 2004 Primary Election. For a number of reasons, including inadequate available funding, the County cannot fully convert to a touchscreen voting system in all 5,000 voting precincts to accommodate the County's 4 million registered voters prior to March 2004.

Therefore, the County will be transitioning to an optical scan paper-based voting system. The new system will look remarkably similar to the current punch card system – the ballot cards and devices are identical EXCEPT that voters will use a pen to mark choices rather than a punching device to poke holes in the ballot cards. The first use of the transitional system is planned for the November 2003 Election (we'll preview it for you at this Fall's training classes). This system will continue in use throughout the 2004 elections. At such time as the County can fully convert to an electronic voting system, this optical scan system is anticipated to remain in use for absentee voting by mail. Additionally, "early voting" on touchscreens will continue to be provided in conjunction with all future major elections and we believe its popularity will grow.

## PHASE 3: COUNTYWIDE USE OF TOUCHSCREEN VOTING

Full Countywide conversion to an electronic touchscreen voting system in all 5,000 voting precincts is the County's eventual goal. The timing of such a conversion is currently unknown primarily due to insufficient funds. Although Proposition 41, a \$200 million statewide bond issue for new voting technology, passed at the March 2002 election, Los Angeles County's anticipated share is \$49 million which is only about half of the amount needed. Assuming Federal or County funds can close the gap in the near future, the November 2005 Election would be the first possible date for full-scale deployment of touchscreen voting at the precincts. Don't worry – we won't jump into ANY new system without fully training all of you in the use of the new equipment and we're sure you'll like it!



### Why Can't We Just Buy a Full-Scale Touchscreen Voting System Right Now?



- **Cost:** Costs are estimated at \$100 million. While LA's estimated share of Prop 41 State funds is \$50 million, a shortfall of \$50 million remains.
- **Rapid Pace of Technology:** By waiting two years to purchase equipment, the County will benefit from lighter weight equipment, learning from other Counties experiences nationwide as they conduct full-scale Election Day touchscreen elections and more competition and enhancements among the companies selling the touchscreen equipment.



## Celebrating Student Pollworkers!

The Student Pollworker Program is catching on all over Los Angeles County! Not only have 117 high schools signed up for November, but thanks to Professor Charles Noble from Cal State Long Beach and Sherrill Pennington from College of the Canyons in Santa Clarita, COLLEGE POLLWORKERS will be joining our pollworker teams this November!



Student Pollworkers from John Francis Polytechnic High School

Placement of students is often complicated by transportation issues and the proximity of their schools. If you have questions about the program call Katie Mac, Student Program Coordinator at (562) 462-2117.

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### HATS OFF TO OUR BILINGUAL POLLWORKER RECRUITING TEAM!



If you have served at one of the County's 1,200 precincts that are targeted to require a bilingual pollworker, you've experienced the value of having a pollworker on-site who can assist limited-English voters. Based on the 2000 U.S. Census Los Angeles County continues to be required to provide assistance in six foreign languages (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, Tagalog and Vietnamese.) Although we are not legally required to provide oral assistance in Armenian, Cambodian or Russian, due to the increase of the immigrant population, we try to provide bilingual pollworkers to targeted polls in these languages as a public service.

A Multilingual (ML) Recruiting team was formed in 1998 to recruit over 2,000 bilingual pollworkers to serve at targeted polls. The ML Team states that the best part of their job is meeting and greeting pollworkers with diverse international backgrounds. For the upcoming November election there is a shortage of Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese speakers. The ML team would also like to express thanks to the bilingual Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk employees who fill in as last-minute bilingual pollworker replacements.





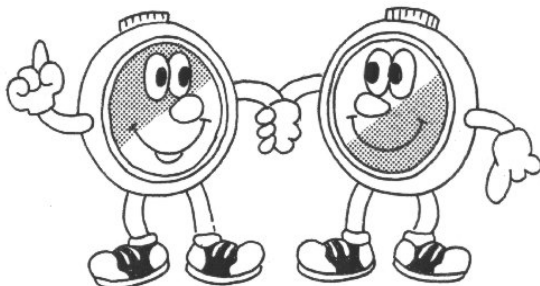
## HOP ON THE “ADOPT-A-POLL” EXPRESS!

Community organizations throughout the County are “adopting” polling places and recruiting pollworkers to staff them as a fundraising opportunity and a way to serve their communities! Some examples:



- **SIERRA MADRE ROTARY CLUB** – Since July, Dr. Janice Nelson has been leading an effort to recruit members from 25 Rotary clubs in the San Gabriel Valley to serve as pollworkers! Fifteen recruits from the Sierra Madre Club plan are looking forward to serving. Members plan to donate their stipends to Rotary International’s program to help eradicate polio throughout the world.
- **SOROPTOMIST INTERNATIONAL OF MANHATTAN BEACH** has already committing 20 of its 30 members to staff 3-4 polls in Manhattan Beach. This is especially good news for us as Manhattan Beach is a difficult-to-recruit-pollworkers area! President Michelle Memmott tells us they plan to donate their stipends to worthy causes such as transitional housing from foster care and scholarships for high schools students. Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk staff member Leslie Foster said, “I could not believe my good luck when Michelle called in to volunteer!”
- **WHITTIER LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS** – The League of Women Voters of the Whittier Area plans to provide Clerks for four hard-to-recruit polls in Whittier. Donated stipends will be used to support Young Voter Outreach, Voter Education in the form of issue awareness and candidate forums.
- **GLENDORA CHARTER KIWANIS CLUB** – Tina Novokoczky and Kay Robinson have already recruited 10 members to serve in Glendora. RR/CC staff member Linda Mendoza said, “What a terrific partnership! Whenever I need a pollworker in Glendora, I call Tina or Kay and they call me back in a couple of days with handful of people who have agreed to serve!”

⚙️ MANY THANKS TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS!! ⚙️



### Don’t Forget About the Split Shift Option!

Congratulations to the following team pollworkers who are splitting a shift:

Ted and Joan Spiegel from Rancho Palos Verdes  
Arlene Brandwie and Dorothy Lynn Walker from Calabasas and Richard Groll and Dorothy Reed Wageman from Studio City!

**Interested?** Just ask our Polls Staff to send you the Split Shift Contract.  
Call (800) 815-2666 Option 7

## Conny's Corner



### THANK YOU FOR MOVING FORWARD WITH US!

**W**E are committed to conducting a smoother election this November. We know that many of you experienced difficulties navigating the "Perfect Storm" March 5, 2002 Primary Election and we truly appreciate your agreeing to serve again this November.

**Working Toward Improvement.** We hope to minimize the number of Election Day "no shows" pollworkers. We've worked to re-united long-standing pollworker teams. Via "Team Re-Build" we have contacted all former Precinct Inspectors and encouraged them to assist in selecting their team members for November. However, pollworker shortages continue to grow due to retirements of many veterans.

**More County Pollworkers.** The County Board of Supervisors has made a commitment on behalf of the County's 85,000 employees to assist in stemming the pollworker recruiting crisis. More than two thousand County employees served for the March 5, 2002 Election and we hope to exceed that number on November 5th. The Supervisors themselves may even serve so don't be surprised if you see Supervisors Molina, Brathwaite Burke, Yaroslavsky, Knabe or Antonovich joining your team on Election morning!

**Expanding within the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk Commitment.** More than 100 managers and staff from the Recorder/County Clerk side of our Department served as last minute replacements for drop-out Inspectors and clerks in the March election. We've established a Reservist program for staff members, each of whom will receive six hours of training. They, along with other Reservists will be dispatched to short-staffed polls on Election morning. We ask your indulgence as we can only send an extra clerk to the most critically under-staffed precincts.

**The Future of Touchscreen Voting.** As you read on pages

4 and 5 we are expanding in phases the use of touchscreen voting. We hope to receive \$49 million from the \$200 million statewide bond issue passed in March, to assist in funding the \$100 million necessary for Countywide Touchscreen in the future. The federal Election Reform bill, may provide additional dollars for new election technology but the bill is still stalled in Congress. *Thank you again for moving forward with us!*



**Gloria Molina**  
First District

**Yvonne Brathwaite Burke**  
Second District

**Zev Yaroslavsky**  
Third District

**Don Knabe**  
Fourth District

**Michael D. Antonovich**  
Fifth District

**Conny B. McCormack**  
Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

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